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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 48/129 of 20 December 1993 on the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, the General Assembly, noting that the difficult financial situation of the Centre had created considerable obstacles to the implementation of the various procedures and mechanisms, had negatively influenced the servicing by the Secretariat of the bodies concerned and had impaired the quality and precision of the reporting, requested the Secretary-General to make additional proposals to increase further the resources of the human rights programme in 1994-1995, so as to enable the Centre fully to discharge its duties implementing all the mandates assigned to it by the Assembly and other legislative bodies. Furthermore, it requested the Secretary-General and Member States to ensure that appropriate additional resources from within the existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations were accorded to the Centre to enable it to carry out, in full and on time, the mandates contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, without diverting resources from development programmes and activities of the United Nations. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session 2/ and a final report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the strengthening of the Centre and on the measures taken to implement the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. In the light of the significant expansion of the Centre's traditional activities and the new demands that have been placed on it resulting from the additional mandates adopted by the Commission on Human Rights and other legislative bodies, the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session approved

the proposals of the Secretary-General included in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 (section 21) which contained the establishment for the Centre of 27 posts at the Professional level and 16 at the General Service level, including: (a) 19 posts at the Professional level (1 P-5, 3 P-4, 10 P-3 and 5 P-2) which were redeployed to the Centre in 1992 and 1993 on a temporary basis; (b) 2 posts at the Professional level (1 P-4 and 1 P-3) and 1 General Service post for the substantive servicing of the Committee against Torture, which were previously funded from extrabudgetary resources; (c) 6 new posts at the Professional level (1 D-1, 1 P-4 and 4 P-3); and (d) 15 new General Service posts. In addition, the General Assembly approved the conversion of 12 temporary posts (3 P-4, 3 P-3 and 6 General Service) into established posts.

3. While approving resources for the Centre, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review the allocation of resources among the approved programmes of the Centre so as to ensure the most effective delivery of all mandated activities and requested the Secretary-General to provide the information requested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for review by the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session (General Assembly resolution 48/228, sect. II). The Advisory Committee had requested information relating to the precise description of the functions to be performed by the incumbents of the new posts approved by the General Assembly and an explanation of the programmatic justifications for the proposed redeployment of posts. The Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/48/77), containing the information requested, was submitted to the Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session.

4. Regarding the establishment of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993), the Secretary-General indicated (A/C.5/48/61) that a number of additional posts - one Under-Secretary-General, two P-5 and three General Service posts - and operational funds would be required, totalling $1,471,400. The General Assembly did not approve the establishment of these posts. It authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to US$ 1,471,400 under section 21 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, to provide for the High Commissioner and his office and to consider such additional appropriation as might be necessary and not to exceed $1,471,400 at its resumed forty-eighth session. At that session, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the question to its forty-ninth session.

5. The General Assembly endorsed the Vienna Declaration and the Programme of Action (resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993). The Secretary-General indicated (A/C.5/48/46) that one P-5, one P-4 and two General Service posts would be required, as well as operational funds totalling $1,167,500. The Assembly did not approve those posts. It authorized the Secretary-General to enter into all the commitments necessary under section 21 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 within the above amount in respect of the full implementation of the activities envisaged in the resolution and to consider such additional appropriation as might be necessary and not to exceed $1,167,500 at its resumed forty-eighth session. At that session, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the question to its forty-ninth session.

6. Furthermore, following consideration of the revised estimates regarding the implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1993/254 relating to the continued United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of US$ 550,000 pending the submission of a report providing detailed justifications. The Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/48/78) providing this information was submitted to the Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session. The Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into additional commitments up to $1,834,100 under section 21 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 for the financing of the human rights activities in Cambodia.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III).

2/ E/CN.4/1994/74.